

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 PRETOR 03903 150959Z

21

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01

ACDA-05 AID-05 IO-10 /074 W  
----- 109557

R 150909Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2905

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3903

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, MILI, RH, MZ

SUBJ: FIRST RHODESIAN - FRELIMO CLASH REPORTED

1. RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES ISSUED CRYPTIC STATEMENT OCT 10 REPORTING INCIDENT PREVIOUS DAY ON MOZAMBIQUE BORDER NEAR UMTALI WHICH CLAIMED LIFE OF ONE RHODESAIN CIVILIAN AND REPORTEDLY AT LEAST ONE FRELIMO SOLDIER. PERTINENT PORTION OF STATEMENT WHICH WAS PRINTED IN FULL IN RHODESIA HERALD BUT NOT IN SOUTH AFRICAN NEWSPAPERS AS FOLLOWS: QUOTE. SECURITY FORCE HEADQUARTERS ANNOUNCED TODAY THAT AT 9:50 A.M. ON OCTOBER 9, 1975, A RHODESIAN WATTLE COMPANY VEHICLE WAS FIRED UPON BY FRELIMO. THE OCCURENCE TOOK PLACE WHILE THE OCCUPANTS WERE CARRYING OUT A ROUTINE TOUR OF THE ESTATES, A SHORT DISTANCE FROM UMTALI. THE AMBUSH WAS ABOUT 30 METERS INSIDE THE RHODESIAN BORDER. IT IS REGRETTEED THAT MR. PETRUS CASPER SNYDERS WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED DURING THIS UNPROVOKED ATTACK ON INNOCENT CIVILIANS AND DIED WHILE BEING CONVEYED TO HOSPITAL....DURING THE SAME INCIDENT HIS COMPANION WAS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 PRETOR 03903 150959Z

INJURED. HIS CONDITION IS NOT SERIOUS. RHODESIAN SECURITY

FORCES AND A HELICOPTER WHICH WAS SENT TO EVACUATE THE CASUALTIES WERE ALSO ATTACKED. THE RHODESIAN GROUND FORCES RETURNED FIRE AND IT IS BELIEVED THAT ONE OF THE ATTACKERS WAS KILLED AND TWO OTHERS INJURED. UNQUOTE.

2. BASED ON OFFICIAL RELEASE, SOUTH AFRICAN AND RHODESIAN PRESS PLAYED STORY AS UNPROVOKED FRELIMO ATTACK ON INNOCENT WHITE CIVILIANS. LATER REVELATIONS BY (SOUTH AFRICAN) SUNDAY EXPRESS HEADLINED THAT "ROUTINE TOUR" WAS ACTUALLY MILITARY RECONNAISSANCE AND THAT OTHER "OCCUPANTS" OF VEHICLE WERE FIVE RHODESIAN ARMY SOLDIERS. ACCORDING TO SUNDAY EXPRESS ARTICLE, AREA HAS BEEN SCENE OF CONTINUING TENSION. AFTER INCIDENT ON OCT 8 WHEN FRELIMO FORCES APPARENTLY HARRASSED LOCAL AGRICULTURAL WORKERS BY SHOOTING OVER THEIR HEADS, SECURITY FORCES WERE ALERTED AND PATROL FOR NEXT DAY SCHEDULED. WHILE DRIVING ON DIRT ROAD "VERY NEAR BORDER", JEEP WAS FIRED ON. REVELATION OF MILITARY NATURE OF PATROL CAUSED SUNDAY EXPRESS TO TRUMPET THAT "RHODESIA HID TRUTH OF SHOOTING." THERE HAS BEEN NO SUBSEQUENT STATEMENT FROM RHODESIAN MILITARY CONCERNING INCIDENT. (RHODESIAN) SUNDAY MAIL ARTICLE OCT 12 REFERRED TO INJURED MAN AS POLICE RESERVIST.

3. BEGIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE. SAG DAF SECRETARY FOURIE CONFIRMED TO AMBASSADOR BOWDLER EVENING OCT 13 THAT PRESS ACCOUNTS REPORTING THAT "TOUR" ACTUALLY MILITARY PATROL WERE ACCURATE. HE WENT ON TO SAY THAT RHODESIAN HAD STARTED AGGRESSIVE PATROLLING SOME TIME AGO. SAG WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THIS BECAUSE BORDER IS UNMARKED AND RHODESIAN PATROLS OCCASIONALLY ENTER INTO MOZAMBIQUE TERRITORY. FEARING INCIDENTS SUCH AS THIS ONE, SAG HAD WARNED SMITH TO KEEP HIS PATROLS WELL WITHIN RHODESIAN TERRITORY. FOURIE DID NOT SPECULATE ON RHODESIAN REGIME'S REASONS FOR CONCEALING NATURE OF INCIDENT. END LOU.

4. COMMENT: ONE INTERPRETATION OF OFFICIAL STATEMENT'S OBFUSCATION IS THAT BY PRESENTING DEAD MAN AS INNOCENT CIVILIAN, RHODESIANS ATTEMPTED PLACE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR INCIDENT ON FRELIMO. MORE PROBABLE EXPLANATION, HOWEVER, IS THAT RHODESIAN FOLLOWED ESTABLISHED POLICY OF ISSUING STATEMENT ON ALL BORDER INCIDENTS INVOLVING LOSS OF CIVILIAN LIFE, BUT DESIRED TO DOWNPLAY TENSION IN UMTALI AREA IN ORDER NOT TO

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 PRETOR 03903 150959Z

INCREASE DOMESTIC APPREHENSIONS OR TO DISTURB DELICATE BALANCE WHICH EXISTS, DESPITE TENSIONS, WITH MOZAMBIKAN GOVERNMENT.  
BOWDLER

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** LIBERATION FRONTS, CIVIL DISORDERS, SECURITY VIOLATIONS, PRESS RELEASES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 15 OCT 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975PRETOR03903  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750357-0251  
**From:** PRETORIA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19751051/aaaabtil.tel  
**Line Count:** 111  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 21 AUG 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <21 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <09 DEC 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** FIRST RHODESIAN - FRELIMO CLASH REPORTED  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PINS, MILI, RH, MZ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006